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gardens take many forms and have a variety of functions they can serve as spaces of peace and tranquility a way to cultivate wildlife or as places to develop agricultural resources globally gardens have inspired comforted and sustained people from all walks of life and since the garden of eden many iconic gardens have inspired great artists poets musicians and writers in this very short introduction gordon campbell embraces gardens in all their splendour from parks and fruit and vegetable gardens to ornamental gardens and takes the reader on a globe trotting historical journey through iconic and cultural signposts of gardens from different regions and traditions ranging from the gardens of ancient persia to modern day allotments he concludes by looking to the future of the garden in the age of global warming and the adaptive spirit of human innovation about the series the very short introductions series from oxford university press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area these pocket sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly our expert authors combine facts analysis perspective new ideas and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable

today many people take reading for granted but we remain some way off from attaining literacy for the global human population and whilst we think we know what reading is it remains in many ways a mysterious process or set of processes the effects of reading are myriad it can be informative distracting moving erotically arousing politically motivating spiritual and much much more at different times and in different places reading means different things in this very short introduction belinda jack explores the fascinating history of literacy and the opportunities reading opens for much of human history reading was the preserve of the elite and most reading meant being read to innovations in printing paper making and transport combined with the rise of public education from the late eighteenth century on brought a dramatic rise in literacy in many parts of the world established links between a nation s levels of literacy and its economy led to the promotion of reading for political ends but equally reading has been associated with subversive ideas leading to censorship through multiple channels denying access to

education controlling publishing destroying libraries and even the burning of authors and their works indeed the works of voltaire were so often burned that an enterprising parisian publisher produced a fire proof edition decorated with a phoenix but as jack demonstrates reading is a collaborative act between an author and a reader and one which can never be wholly controlled telling the story of reading from the ancient world to digital reading and restrictions today belinda jack explores why it is such an important aspect of our society about the series the very short introductions series from oxford university press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area these pocket sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly our expert authors combine facts analysis perspective new ideas and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable

students of literature film and cultural studies need to understand key theoretical terms and concepts but often find it hard to get to grips with exactly what they mean this book provides precise definitions of terms and concepts in literary theory along with explanations of the major movements and figures in literary and cultural theory and an extensive bibliography it is designed for the student who needs to know what a particular term means how it is used and where it comes from and enables them to apply the terms and concepts to their own investigations the three part structure provides clear definitions of key terms and ideas introductions to major figures including biographical and historical overviews and an annotated guide to important works this invaluable resource provides readers with an easily accessible and comprehensive reference guide to literary and cultural theory

poststructuralism changes the way we understand the relations between human beings their culture and the world following a brief account of the historical relationship between structuralism and poststructuralism this very short introduction traces the key arguments that have led poststructuralists to challenge traditional theories of language and culture whilst the author discusses such well known figures as barthes foucault derrida and lacan she also draws pertinent examples from literature art film and popular culture unfolding the postructuralist account of what it means to be a human being about the series the very short introductions series from oxford university press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area these pocket sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly our expert authors combine facts analysis perspective new ideas and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable

a lively and thematic treatment of early greek philosophy this work discusses the invention of western philosophy the first thinkers to explore ideas about the nature of reality time and the origin of the universe

modern arabic literature remains little known and poorly understood despite growing curiosity among european readers this brief introduction offers a unique overview focusing on developments over the last fifty years it provides a guide to the literary landscape indicating the major landmarks in the shape of authors ideas and debates the picture that emerges shows that the literature of the modern arab world europe s closest neighbour is not so far from us as we are sometimes encouraged to think this is a timely contribution to the dialogue between east and west bringing modern arabic literature into the mainstream for english speaking readers

in this book critique and counterproposal are given to freudianism freudian leftist s theory poststructuralism postfeminism and to queer theory which are the foundation of today s sex liberation theories based on unification thought which was advocated by reverend sun myung moon

the books are true while reality is lying championing the popular fantasy genre on the same terms as its readers rayment casts a critical eye over the substance and methods of political critique in the fantasy novels of terry pratchett philip pullman and china miéville ranging across subjects as diverse as exquisite fundamentalism and revolutionary trains encountering pervert priests dwarf hermaphrodites and sex scarred lovers and pondering the homicidal tendencies of fairy tales and opera fantasy politics postmodernity develops a theoretically wide ranging and illuminating account of how the novels of these writers do and do not sustain politically insightful critique of the real world while bringing intellectual and ethical concerns to bear on the popular fantasy form

lively original and highly readable an introduction to literature criticism and theory is the essential guide to literary studies starting at the beginning and concluding with the end chapters range from the familiar such as character narrative and the author to the more unusual such as secrets pleasure and ghosts now in its sixth edition bennett and royle s classic textbook successfully illuminates complex ideas by engaging directly with literary works so that a reading of jane eyre opens up ways of thinking about racial difference for example while chaucer monty python and hilary mantel are all invoked in a discussion of

literature and laughter the sixth edition has been revised and updated throughout in addition four new chapters literature loss human and migrant engage with exciting recent developments in literary studies as well as fully up to date further reading sections at the end of each chapter the book contains a comprehensive bibliography and an invaluable glossary of key literary terms a breath of fresh air in a field that can often seem dry and dauntingly theoretical this book will open the reader s eyes to the exhilarating possibilities of reading and studying literature

epicureanism is commonly associated with a carefree view of life and the pursuit of pleasures particularly the pleasures of the table however it was a complex and distinctive system of philosophy that emphasized simplicity and moderation and considered nature to consist of atoms and the void epicureanism is a school of thought whose legacy continues to reverberate today in this very short introduction catherine wilson explains the key ideas of the school comparing them with those of the rival stoics and with kantian ethics and tracing their influence on the development of scientific and political thought from locke newton and galileo to rousseau marx bentham and mill she discusses the adoption and adaptation of epicurean motifs in science morality and politics from the 17th century onwards and contextualises the significance of epicureanism in modern life about the series the very short introductions series from oxford university press contains hundreds of titles in almost every subject area these pocket sized books are the perfect way to get ahead in a new subject quickly our expert authors combine facts analysis perspective new ideas and enthusiasm to make interesting and challenging topics highly readable

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